

# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



HOITY TOITY!

## THE CLACKITTS OF INGLEBROOK HALL.

CHAPTER XVIII.—"ON DIT."

"I'm very happy to hear it," said Mr. Flummers. "She is a very nice girl, and all happiness be to her. I hope they'll settle in Inglebrook; but where did you hear the news?"

"Oh, my wife told me. Miss Priss is a great favourite of ours, though we seldom see her. She hasn't a bit of the Clackitt nonsense," said Mr. Thatcher.

"Not a bit—not a bit. I suppose it's true?"

"True; oh, I can't say about that. My father used to say a story wants three siftings when it comes from a woman; and my experience has shown me he was right, in a general way. This may be true; but I answer for nothing."

"I may congratulate the family?"

"Oh, for anything I care; my authority is Mrs. Thatcher."

"Drive on," said Mr. Flummers, and quickly he alighted at the Hall.

The table was covered with fancy work, which

Rosabella had undertaken for a bazaar which Miss McRocket was to have the credit of assisting; that young lady finding it very convenient to do it by means of Rosabella's trouble and expense.

Priscilla was not in the room, and Mr. Flummers soon opened his subject.

"I beg to offer my congratulations, Mr. Clackitt, —and to you, ma'am, though I am afraid the gentleman's gain will be your loss."

A stare universal was the only reply.

"Oh, come, come! I know all about it. You can't keep your affairs secret. People that live in large houses have plenty of eyes on them, depend on it. It's all abroad, I assure you."

"What is?" said Mrs. Clackitt.

"Why, that Miss Priss is to be married, and famously well, too."

An exclamation was the answer this time.

"Pray favour us with the gentleman's name," said Rosabella.

Mr. Flummers had a great dislike to Rosabella, to whom he imputed everything disagreeable that the family did.

"It's rather hard," he said, "for Miss Priss to have stolen a march on you, Miss Rosa; but never mind, it's a large family, and another husband may come out of it yet."

With a scarlet face and a haughty toss of the head the young lady declared herself quite ignorant of Mr. Flummers's meaning, while Mr. and Mrs. Clackitt were evidently so much surprised, that he began to think he must have been misinformed.

"Well, true or not, I was told for a truth that Miss Priss was going to be married to Mr. Middleton's nephew."

"Utterly false!" exclaimed Mr. Clackitt, whom Rosabella and Sir Thomas had made quite furious about Mr. Middleton.

"Deary me, it's all a mistake," said Mrs. Clackitt.

"I'm much obliged to you, Mr. Flummers," said Rosabella, with a scornful laugh, "for wishing me an alliance with that family."

"Well, I hope no offence," said Flummers. "You know that Mr. Middleton is connected with the Walthams."

"A poor relation," said Mr. Clackitt, contemptuously, "whom they have provided for with this curacy; but I object to hearing his name mentioned. I have desired he may not be admitted when he calls."

Mr. Flummers opened his eyes.

"I'm sorry. Wish it had been true, and the right person. If ever there was a promising person for a good wife, it's Miss Priss. You mustn't expect to keep her long, ma'am," said he, as he shook her mother by the hand.

Mrs. Clackitt's eyes glistened; but she said, "I can't spare her, Mr. Flummers."

"No wonder, no wonder. You must all want to keep her; everybody loves her; she's the praise of all Inglebrook," he said, with his eyes fixed on the heightening colour of Rosabella.

"I'm glad it's not true, unless she had settled at Inglebrook; but it's well I know the truth; for I should have gone on spreading the report like wildfire."

As he drove through Inglebrook, he met Priscilla. He left his carriage to speak with her.

"I have not seen you since poor Will died, Mr.

Flummers. Do you know that one of the last things he said was about your kindness to him?"

"Poor lad; poor lad! Yes, Mr. Middleton told me something about it. I was glad, I'm sure, to do anything for him. I always liked poor Will; he was a strange mixture,—so foolish, and yet what a memory he had! Once he would not answer a question I asked him, but kept saying one verse after another, as fast as possible, all over the Bible. I can't answer for their being quite right, I'm sorry to say, but I think they were pretty nearly that way; and yet he couldn't read. How was it?"

"He used to listen most attentively to the Scriptures in church; and when any portion attracted him, he never rested till he had got it read to him by one and another, till he always learnt the text perfectly, and very often much of one of the lessons every week; and his memory was surprisingly tenacious of the Scriptures, though nothing else of an intellectual kind was retained by it."

"Yes; I've heard all this. I've often noticed him at church; how he used to sit and watch Mr. Middleton; they say he couldn't understand anything of the sermon but the text. Well, after all, that's the main thing."

"Have you often seen him, Mr. Flummers?"

"Yes, whenever I've been at church. Oh, yes! I see what you mean. I seldom go to church; but you see, we doctors are privileged people!"

"Privileged in what sense, Mr. Flummers?"

"Why, I mean we can't be as regular as other folks, and nobody thinks the worse of us for that."

Priscilla looked at him.

"I see what you mean; it's of little consequence what people think of us in those matters; well, it's quite true; we live in a bustle, but we must die by ourselves. I shall try to be more regular. I believe I might manage it if I would; but somehow one gets into the habit of paying Sunday visits when they are not absolutely necessary."

"Will used to pray for you, Mr. Flummers—I've often heard him—mixed up with his strange mutterings."

"Poor fellow! Did he, indeed? Well, I need it, I'm sure. I'm too much for the world—too much; but what's to be done? You see I've a large family, and a great deal to think of. However, what Mr. Middleton said the other day was quite true—quite true; and Bessy and I mean to turn over a new leaf; not but what Bessy was always more given to good things than I was. Miss Priss, I wish you would come and see us sometimes. My wife would take it kindly; and what is it about 'iron sharpening iron'—something, is there not, of that sort, in the Bible? I remember Mr. Middleton gave us a very good sermon on it one day when I was at church."

"I remember it, too," said Priscilla; "and I shall be very glad to call on Mrs. Flummers. It has been no want of kind feeling that has kept me away. I visit nowhere."

"I know,—I know it. More's the pity. There are many that would be better for your company; but I won't keep you standing. Miss Priss, one thing—remember that if at any time among your pensioners you want my help, send for me without scruple. I shall always be most happy to come if I can. No thanks, no thanks—quite a pleasure, quite a pleasure!"

While he drove briskly on, Priscilla pursued her

morning rounds, and arrived at home some time after. She found the family sitting in the morning room, looking like a sky before a storm. Finding commonplace remarks not responded to, she took her work and seated herself by her mother.

Mr. Clackitt began.

"Priscilla, do you gather from your principles, taught you by Mr. Middleton, that it is correct to carry on a clandestine correspondence, and contract an engagement with a person whom your father would utterly disapprove of?"

She looked up as if trying to take in all the words and their meaning, and then quietly answered—

"No."

"Then what is the meaning of the report circulated about you?"

"What report?"

"Why that—you are going to be married."

"Is it reported? Well, I suppose I am not the first victim that has been sacrificed by the public in that way," she said, smiling. "That is not so bad as holding—what did you say?—'clandestine correspondence;' but who is my husband to be?"

"Priscilla, if the report be *not* true, it is very disgraceful that you should be in the habit of writing constantly to a gentleman whom your family don't know, and don't wish to know," said Rosabella, with ill-disguised triumph.

"Who is the gentleman you don't know, and don't wish to know? I wish to know very much; so pray tell me."

"Show her the letter, pa, and then she'll see what we know;" and Priscilla saw a letter laid on the table, which she had given the night before to Mrs. Sharp; it had not gone in the letter-bag. Priscilla had left it at the shop.

She took it up and said, "This is strange; it ought to have gone last night."

"Well, if that's not cool!" said Rosabella.

"Oh, no wonder you were surprised," she said, turning to her father. "This letter is from Miss Manners to Captain Middleton. She asked me to direct it for her, just before I left her last night, and leave it at the post. I have frequently done the same. Is this my husband?" she said, laughing; "but, indeed, this must be investigated; the letter ought to have gone last night; and I'm sure the envelope has been tampered with; it must go to Miss Manners."

In vain Rosabella entreated and threatened, and declared that she had promised Mrs. Sharp that no one should see the letter, and that it was on that condition only that she had suffered *her* to see it, which she did most unwillingly.

"I don't consider that Mrs. Sharp has done my character any harm by spreading the report," said Priscilla, "neither do I believe that she intended to do so; but it is not right that the letters should be kept back, and I am sure some one has tried to open this; I shall certainly give it to Miss Manners. I think my father will see the propriety of it."

Mr. Clackitt, on hearing the letter satisfactorily accounted for, had felt something like shame at having for a moment supposed Priscilla capable of acting so improperly, and he subsided, in rather a meek manner, back in his chair. He agreed with Priscilla, but dared not dissent from Rosabella. He therefore looked perplexed, and said nothing. Priscilla, without waiting for his sanction, sealed the letter up, and took it to Miss Manners.

It must be shown how this letter came into Rosabella's possession.

Mr. Thatcher was applied to immediately after Mr. Flummers's departure from the Hall as to the rumoured marriage; and Mr. Thatcher, in a summary manner, gave up Mrs. Thatcher as his authority.

Mrs. Thatcher apologised for having meddled with the matrimonial matters of the house of Clackitt, and gave up Miss Chuffer as *her* authority.

Miss Chuffer was *particularly* shocked that she should be involved in the business. Her only participation in it was this—she had mentioned to Mrs. Thatcher how angry she had been with her Sarah for taking the liberty of repeating any report about dear Miss Priscilla.

Sarah particularly denied having said more than she had heard in the kitchen at Mr. Thatcher's; the dairy-maid had been her informant.

The dairy-maid confessed the truth; her particular friend, the waggoner, had told her.

The waggoner thought he had heard it at Dawkins, the blacksmith's, while the grey mare was being shod.

Dawkins, unwillingly, gave up Mrs. Sharp.

Mrs. Sharp, at first, had quite lost her memory. She was innocent and ignorant; but being forced into a recollected state of mind, she declared "as hall as hever she said, was this—as it was a very hodd thing about the letter goin'—not as she hever minded the letters, honly, they was so often sent—and, 'a course, as she 'ad said to Dawkins hover and hover again, Miss Priss might write to every gentleman in England, and no harm be in it. 'Twasn't likely as such a good, religious young lady should ever do anything wrong."

"What letters?" was immediately asked.

"The letters to Captain Edward Middleton."

Amazement and indignation followed this confession. "Letters to Captain Middleton from Miss Priscilla? Impossible!"

Mrs. Sharp, on being flatly contradicted, declared, that it was not only true, but that "she could show Miss Rosa one—that very minute—as she *quite forgot* to give to the postman last night!"

Thus did Rosabella—who almost by main force took the letter away, that she might convict her sister—get possession of what she believed would be a sufficient witness against Priscilla.

Poor Mrs. Sharp never forgot this lesson. The fact of her gossip-loving propensity had long been known, and her tampering with the letters had been suspected; but it was now clearly proved, and the confidence of the Inglebrook public was withdrawn from her. She was soon postmistress no longer. She was in fear lest, as a further punishment, her customers would desert her; and indeed for some time she was forsaken by those who feared their servants might be corrupted by her. This, however, died away gradually, and as she had been frightened into discretion, she never committed herself again so as to arouse any further the voice of censure.

Dawkins had not helped to try the letter. "It's a pity as she's so prying," he righteously observed to a friend. Nippy's wife had kept *him* safe.

"How eminently nefarious!" he exclaimed. "How could she think of perpetrating so perilous a mis-demeanour?"

To which his wife quietly replied, "I'm glad you're out of it, Solomon!"



## CHAPTER XIX.—WHAT HAPPENED AT THE LECTURE.

"You will go, papa?"

"Oh, of course. I shall take seats for the family."

"You will take front seats, next to the Walthams?"

"Yes; we will drive into Allport this morning and secure them."

The seats to be secured were in the music-hall at Allport, where a very superior lecture on astronomy was to be given, with diagrams and transparencies of the first order.

Sir Thomas had been very urgent with Mr. Clackitt and Rosabella, to go. He had two reasons. One was to show them off—Mr. Clackitt in his ignorance, and Rosabella in her learning—for the amusement of the Manor House party, and the display of his own wit; and the other was that he might administer a strong dose of flattery to Mr. Clackitt, by appearing to desire his company in public, among the great, previous to borrowing a sum of money from him, which he wished to obtain before leaving Inglebrook, for he was an extravagant man, and withal very poor. He knew he should never receive another invitation to the Manor House, and that his acquaintance with all there would end at his departure. He had no scruple, therefore, about leaving it encumbered with a debt which he never meant to discharge.

"I thoroughly despise the fellow," said General Waltham, when speaking of him to Mr. Middleton. "If it were not for his wife and daughter, who are, however, not much better, I would send him off at once; but he must stay out his time now. An accident threw him in my way, and my obligations to his brother—a totally different man—made me ask him. I have paid penalty for my indiscretion. My mother has tasked me for it sufficiently, and I am heartily weary of his low, selfish vulgarity, to me as unpalatable as that of his butt, old Clackitt."

The Baronet had little trouble to induce Mr. Clackitt and Rosabella to attend the lecture. All the *élite* of the neighbourhood might be expected; and to be acknowledged as the intimate friend of Sir Thomas before those who had never condescended to notice him, was glory indeed to Mr. Clackitt.

The seats were secured.

"Thomas, you don't seem at all well to-day. I think a quiet evening would suit you better than going to that place."

So said Mrs. Clackitt, and with much wisdom. Her husband was *not* well. His flushed face, and quick, nervous manner, betokened no good; and he would have been much better at home. But they went—he and Rosabella, and Miss Clackitt. Priscilla was sorry to miss the lecture, but her mother had a decided objection to going, and she stayed at home with her; for Mrs. Clackitt was not quite well, and Priscilla thought a little comfortable nursing and quiet chat would be really useful to her.

As the three drove to Allport, one horse took fright, and they narrowly escaped mischief; but the worst evil sustained was detention on the road, so that they did not arrive until the first part of the lecture was over. The room was full—and, important to the brim and running over, Mr. Clackitt and his

daughter and sister paraded to their seats—which brought them in close contact with the Manor House party.

If their desire and endeavour had been to make themselves universally conspicuous, they could not have succeeded better than by coming in so late; for the lights, which had been extinguished to show the orrery, were now in full blaze again till the lecture was to be resumed.

Mr. Clackitt looked anxiously round for his friend; but Sir Thomas was not to be seen—he had gone behind the curtain to investigate the apparatus of the lecturer, being always anxious to get all he could from everybody in every way.

Rosabella also was disappointed; her dear Miss McRocket, who had ascertained which were their seats—had stationed herself at the greatest possible distance from them, and could only give a "propriety" bow in return to her salutations. Miss Chuffer and the Flummerses, and the Thatchers, were in the seats behind. Rosabella saw none of them except Mr. Flummers, to whom she gave a patronising bow. Poor Miss Chuffer was mortified, but tried to persuade herself she was only sorry for Rosabella's folly, and wished to her companions she were like her *particularly* charming sister. When the lights were again extinguished for the lecture to proceed, Sir Thomas, who did not know of the addition to the audience, returned to the company. Almost before he arrived at the seats, he said to General Waltham—"How sorry I am old Clackitt isn't here. I would give fifty pounds to have him. There are capital things coming about the moon, which would have enabled me to lead him into various delusions for the general edification. Poor old Tommy—let's see—you know he was a cheesemonger, so I couldn't have tried the popular impression of its being made of green cheese, or he would have taken it personally. As to Miss Rosy, she would have quoted astronomy books by the page. Would you believe it—she told me the other day she thought 'Newton's Principia' 'a lovely book.' I thought I would just try her, so I named it among others."

A loud laugh finished this speech; and the speaker's voice was quite loud enough to be heard not only by those in the seats before which he was standing, but by those who sat immediately behind.

"Well, Sir Thomas, I should think Mr. Clackitt would never believe you again," said Mr. Middleton.

"Only wait till to-morrow," said the Baronet, "I'll cram him; and, General, you must get him to dinner, and I'll play him off to a better advantage than ever."

General Waltham, who had for some time been fast asleep—his usual habit in the evening—did not hear this speech; he had settled himself so comfortably when the lecture began, that, when the lights went out, he dozed off, and the entrance of the Clackitts, and the return of the lamps, had failed to arouse him.

But did Mr. Clackitt hear? Did Rosabella hear?

Before the second part of the lecture had concluded, the latter whispered to her father, who had not uttered a word in reply to all the noisy remarks and jokes—some about the lecture, and some about himself—which the Baronet continued to make; and they both arose, and, with Miss Clackitt, left the room.

"Pa does not feel well," said Rosabella to Mr. Middleton, as well as she could command her voice.

Mr. Middleton immediately rose, and giving his

arm to Mr. Clackitt, went with them to seek their carriage, and see them safely into it.

Not till then did Sir Thomas become aware of the mistake he had made. 'Always near sighted, and particularly so when excited by wine, he had failed, in the darkness, to discover that the Clackitt seats were filled; and in his boisterous, half-intoxicated state, went beyond his usual prudence in trying to entertain himself and the company.

Priscilla was reading to her mother, who sat in her easy-chair, looking the picture of happiness, when the party returned.

"How early!" she exclaimed; but, without any comment or explanation, Mr. Clackitt sat down before the fire, looked straight into it, and did not speak—returning no answer to any inquiries.

Miss Clackitt sat on another chair, and used her smelling-bottle.

Rosabella threw herself on a sofa, and burst out into loud, hysterical sobs.

"Deary me!" said Mrs. Clackitt, "whatever is the matter?" and, looking first at one and then at another, she and Priscilla became lost in perplexity.

"I wish I had *died* before I had gone. Deceitful—ungrateful—wicked—hypocrite!"

Mr. Clackitt did not speak.

"Oh, if we had but been upset!" said Rosabella.

Mr. Clackitt still looked at the fire.

"Oh, pa! pa! what *shall* we do?" sobbed the young lady, in an agony of tears.

Mr. Clackitt slightly shuddered, got up, took a light, and said, "I am going to bed."

"Priss, my lamb, your father is ill, I'm sure," said the old lady. "Send for Mr. Flummers directly. Oh, deary me; I said he would be ill," and, with all speed, she followed him to his room.

"Rosabella, what *is* the matter?" asked Priscilla. "What is the matter?" she continued, turning to Miss Clackitt; but Rosabella could only frantically sob, and abuse somebody, and Miss Clackitt was speechless from the shock she had sustained. Like her brother, she took a light, and with a longer and paler face than usual, and a deep sigh and silent tears, she retired to her chamber.

Mr. Flummers quickly obeyed the summons. He found Mr. Clackitt in a fit, such as he had often known him to suffer from.

"Mr. Flummers," said Priscilla, "did anything happen at the lecture? We are quite in the dark."

She then described their return.

"We can get no information out of my aunt and sister; and the servants say my father seemed well when he got into the carriage, and that Mr. Middleton helped him in."

Mr. Flummers was averse to hurting the feelings of Mrs. Clackitt and her daughter; so with much tenderness and care he gave the history of what had occurred,—not sparing Sir Thomas, whom he denounced as "a low, vulgar fellow, and no gentleman."

"I wonder General Waltham could suffer such a man in his company; he was half-drunk to-night, I assure you! To say the truth, Miss Priss, I am not sorry your father has found him out; for I'm sure he's a very bad companion for him; he hasn't been like the same man since he knew him."

Priscilla felt this truth even more strongly than Mr. Flummers; and, though pained to see her father suffer, could not but rejoice at what had happened.

She left Rosabella to herself, thinking the mortifi-

cation she had undergone had better be felt in all its severity; but she tried by every soothing act of kindness to divert her father's mind from the subject.

Mrs. Clackitt never alluded to it in the most distant way; like Priscilla, she looked for good to arise from it, and rejoiced at what had occurred.

She was sitting in the sick-room the day after, engaged in her knitting, and chatting for the amusement of the invalid, when Mr. Middleton was announced. She looked up.

"Not to-day," said Mr. Clackitt, faintly. "I'm too ill to-day;" and the servant retired. "Mary," he continued, "go to him; ask him to come to-morrow. I will see him to-morrow."

Mrs. Clackitt gladly obeyed, and was in time to see him before he had left the house.

When he had inquired after Mr. Clackitt's health, he added, "I am charged with an apology from Sir Thomas; if intoxication can be an excuse—that is his plea for his conduct last night."

"Tell him I forgive him with all my heart; it is the kindest thing he has ever done to my husband."

"You are right," said Mr. Middleton, "it is the first piece of sincerity you have ever had from him, and not the less valuable because it came by mistake."

"Tell him," said the old lady, in return to Mr. Middleton's smile, "with a few lessons like these, I have hopes that my dear husband will be driven to find his friends among very different people."

Mr. Clackitt recovered very slowly from an attack which had been for some time coming on; and when he was able to go out, supported by an arm and a stick, the Manor House had lost all its inmates, and was again left to David Brownlow's care. He never mentioned the Baronet's name, nor in any way alluded to the past. He received Mr. Middleton's visits at first with shyness, mingled with gratitude,—but very soon with gladness; and he was often heard to say, "Mr. Middleton is a true gentleman."

Rosabella remained in black despair. She dreaded going out while the McRockets remained, lest she should meet them. She dreaded it when they left, lest she should meet Miss Chuffer, who, in the fulness of her sympathy, could not refrain from pitying her. Now that Rosabella was in trouble, Miss Chuffer was in a position to do the noble thing, and show her that her ill conduct had not alienated her affection from her. "Adversity is the time to try friends, dear."

But what a void was Rosabella's life now! She had hitherto, of late, done everything in reference to the Manor House;—her whole object in all she did, and almost said, was gone. Society had again shut its door upon her, and she was a poor, desolate outcast. Poor Rosabella—she was ever teasing her father to leave Inglebrook and go abroad, or somewhere where people were less exclusive. But Mr. Clackitt was not now so easily led by her as he once was. "Your mother likes Inglebrook," he would reply, "and I don't wish to leave it."

"How little we know what things are really for good," said Priscilla one day, talking over these matters with Miss Manners. "I lay all the peace and harmony that now reign in our house to Sir Thomas McRocket, in a great measure. How well I remember Mr. Middleton's saying, when I was lamenting the Walthams' coming to Inglebrook, 'It will all be right in the end.'"

"Ah, he is a true prophet," said Miss Manners.

## THE ORDER OF NATURE AND MIRACLES.

AMIDST all the wondrous variety of objects and endless diversities of change in creation, there are fixed arrangements and regular sequences, which we call briefly "the order of nature." Under the same conditions the same facts and phenomena occur, and we naturally expect their occurrence. This belief in the constancy and regularity of nature is so universal and deep-seated that some describe it as an intuitive principle, or one of the fundamental laws of thought. However this may be, regularity in the order of nature is presupposed in all human knowledge and experience. And what is true of common experience is still more required in that systematised knowledge which is called inductive science. The sum of modern philosophy in all its branches is what Lord Bacon, the founder of that philosophy, called "the interpretation of nature." This is expressed in the first axiom of the "*Novum Organum*:" "*Homo naturæ minister ac interpres, tantum facit ac intelligit quantum de naturæ ordine re vel mente observaverit: nec amplius scit aut potest*:"—Man, the minister and interpreter of nature, is limited in knowledge and action, whether in the world of matter or the world of mind, by what he may have observed of "the order of nature."

The regularity of this order of nature is most apparent and most readily recognised in the outer world with which physical science has to do. But the same constancy of facts and regularity of operations prevails in the world of mind. It is true that here the perception of order is more difficult. Disturbing causes are so numerous and powerful as often to baffle judgment and disappoint experience. But this is to be ascribed to the weakness of human perception, not to absence of order in the objects of mental reflection and observation. There is no such thing as chance, and no such thing as confusion, in the sequences of the mental any more than in the material world. Order here prevails amidst seeming disorder, though it may be visible only to higher intelligence than man. There is enough of regularity to admit of the facts and phenomena of thought and feeling being interpreted on the principles of inductive philosophy, so as to furnish materials of intellectual and moral as well as political science. On the knowledge thus obtained, whether from individual minds or from the study of mankind, some of the most useful arts are founded, as the arts of reasoning, of politics, and of education. Apart, however, from systematic study of the human mind, observation of its phenomena is necessary in every one's daily experience. For this observation, a belief in the general order of nature, in the mind as well as in the outer world, is necessary. Without it, vain would be the training of experience, vain would be the teaching of history, vain the lessons of life.

By a figure of speech the term *law* is commonly used in reference to the order of nature. Thus we speak of the law of gravitation, the laws of chemistry, the laws of thought, meaning thereby the general facts and phenomena ascertained by observation in each department of knowledge. It is a mode of speaking which is convenient from its conciseness, but which may lead to error if taken in a literal instead of a figurative sense. Let it be remembered that this is merely a metaphor, adopted from human language. To speak of "a violation of the laws of

nature" is an abuse of language, as if the Deity had prescribed to himself a passive uniformity of operation in governing the universe. A like abuse of the metaphorical statement has led many to keep the Deity out of view in studying his works, and to deal with *general laws* as if they were *efficient causes*. Nothing more is implied by the word *law* than the observed *order* of nature.

The existing order of nature, it must be here noted, is not necessary, but conditioned. It is the result of the appointment and will of the Creator.

The distinction between *necessary* and *contingent* truth is familiar to every sound thinker, though often overlooked in the superficial writings of sceptics. The objects of inductive science altogether belong to the class of contingent or conditioned truth.\* We can conceive the order of nature to have been in many ways different from what it now is. There might have been other physical laws, other laws of chemistry, other laws of thought. Taking phenomena separately, there is no necessity in the nature of things for the inclination of the earth's axis, which produces our variety of seasons; there is no necessity for certain affinities of atoms producing combinations useful to man; no necessity for certain outward conditions causing the emotions they now produce in the mind. All these arrangements are due to the Divine power and wisdom and will. We can conceive other facts and phenomena than those which constitute the existing order of nature. The relation of vital forces to those of physics and chemistry might be different from what they are now. The relation of electricity, of heat, of light, might be other than it now is to matter and its laws. In other conditions of this world these things might be different. What they now are is the result of the arrangement of the Creator, and is discovered by our inductive research. But it is not so with necessary truth—the axioms of mathematics, for instance. In no conceivable world could the part be greater than the whole. In no possible world could two and two make five; no amount of testimony could induce such a belief. Yet we have seen this very argument used, that we might as well believe two and two to make five as believe in the order of nature being set aside by a miracle!

Miracles are usually defined as violations of the laws of nature. "A miracle," says David Hume, "may be accurately defined as a transgression of a law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent." Bearing in mind what has been said of the conventional use of the term *law*, this definition is most objectionable. The order of nature is wholly the result of God's sovereign wisdom and will. It is an abuse of language to represent the Creator as violating or transgressing laws which from first to last are under his control. God is subject to no law in this sense of the word. A miracle is only a departure from that mode of action which is observed to be the usual one in the existing constitution and govern-

\* Mr. J. S. Mill, with all his acuteness, never seemed able to understand Sir William Hamilton's statements about "the philosophy of the conditioned." Professor Baden Powell, although distinguished both as a mathematician and physicist, stumbles at the same point. Referring to the remarks of Dr. Abercrombie and of Dr. Chalmers on the force of testimony, Mr. Powell adds, "So that if a number of respectable witnesses were to concur in asseverating that on a certain occasion they had seen two and two make five, we should be bound to believe them!" ("Essays and Reviews," 1860, p. 141.)



ment of the world. But God may have other modes of action, and there is no limit to infinite wisdom and power in dealing with his own works. To believe otherwise would be to regard the order of nature as eternal and immutable, and thus to transfer to created things the attributes of the Creator. That the order of nature is not eternal and immutable science itself bears testimony. Except we believe in the eternity of matter and the rule of blind chance, we know that a special interposition of Deity must have taken place in the creation of the world, in the origin of living creatures, and in the existing constitution of external nature.

A theory has been propounded that miracles are the result of some larger general law, the operations of which appear only at long distant periods. They are, as it were, part of the same mechanism, a wheel working in a larger cycle. This idea may have sprung from a sincere, but certainly a mistaken desire to do homage to the Divine Wisdom. It is very like the old pagan notion of relieving the Deity from the care of superintending his own works. Miracles are regarded as special interpositions of God for special purposes, and the truth of this claim is denied by describing them as part of the mere wheel-work of nature.

In studying the order of nature, we constantly observe conflict of forces, or interference of various classes of sequences. Thus we see the laws of chemistry modified by the laws of heat or of vital action. We see the laws of motion suspended, or called into action by volition; the will itself being influenced by previous influences, whether external or internal. The introduction of volition among the ordinary sequences of nature adds a new element of uncertainty in tracing, and difficulty in forecasting, events, but at the same time it throws light upon the relation of nature's sequences. These have among themselves nothing of the element of power implied in the terms cause and effect. They are mere successions of phenomena between or above which there is room for the interposition of volition or the agency of mind. This we see plainly within the sphere of our own observation. And if human volition thus arrests, and controls, and changes the sequences of the material world, much more is there room for the controlling agency of the omnipotent and omnipresent Divine will. In the words of Hume, "a particular volition of the Deity, or the interposition of some invisible agent," may interfere with the order of nature, and so produce a miracle.

The assertion that miracles are *impossible* is therefore baseless and untenable. No one who believes in the existence of God, the Almighty and Infinite One, can seriously deny the possibility of miracles, or that he can act in other ways than those which come under our finite observation. Even Hume did not deny this, but only affirmed that a miracle could not be proved, that no amount of testimony could outweigh the evidence for the constancy of nature's laws. This is therefore the next point to be considered.

Miracles, then, it is said, though possible, cannot be proved, because they are contrary to experience. Contrary to what experience? That they are contrary to *our* experience, or to *ordinary* experience, is admitted. That they are contrary to *all* experience is denied. To affirm that they are is simply begging the question. It comes to be a matter of testimony, and upon testimony our belief of most of the facts of

science and of most of the events of history depends. Now there is no fact of science and no event of history established by such cumulative force of evidence as that great miracle which is given as the foundation of outward belief in Christianity, the resurrection of Christ. Every circumstance which gives convincing power to human testimony combines in establishing this fact. The number of the witnesses, their character, the agreement of their testimony, the trial of their belief even to death, the existence of commemorative institutions dating from the very time of the miracles—such as the change of the Sabbath to the first day of the week—and the whole ordinance of Christian doctrine and worship, all this forms a cumulative demonstration of the truth of the resurrection as a historical fact. To deny the authenticity or truth of the records in the gospels, as some modern infidels do, will not destroy the evidence. Not the history of the Christian church only, but the history of the world, and more especially of the Jewish nation, with their ancient prophecies and modern annals, turns on this fact of the resurrection of Christ.\*

### A BLOW ON THE RIVER.

BY "THE JOURNEYMAN ENGINEER."

THAT all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, is an adage in which Jack is naturally a firm believer, and being a practical fellow, and knowing that there is no help like self-help, he has set aside for himself a time to play—to wit, "Saint Monday." This tacitly canonised day is, of all others, the one best suited to Jack for holiday-making purposes. The Sunday clothes have not yet been brushed and put away, the remains of the Sunday joint are available as the groundwork of an outdoor collation, and—most important of all—the housework being well under hand at this early period of the week, the "missis" and children can accompany Jack in his holiday without any joy-marring sense of home duties neglected.

Of holidays in the "society" sense Jack cannot partake. The twelfth of August and first of September have no place among his red-letter days. The yacht cruise, the Alpine tour, the Norway salmon stream, the Highland moor or loch, the English country house, are all things undreamt of in his philosophy. A moment's self-examination might reveal to him that he possessed the desire to have, and the capability to enjoy such holidays, but as their duration must be counted by weeks or months, and as time is money with him, they are altogether beyond his reach; and he being, as we have said, a practical fellow, allows no thought of them to trouble him.

His own holidays must, of necessity, take the form of day "outings." Of these an immense variety are (we speak of metropolitan Jack, as being the most thoroughly representative in these matters) open to

\* It is sometimes said that miracles diminish in number as the world increases in knowledge, and as science advances. This is true only of miracles in the vague popular use of the word. What are marvels to our generation are common facts to those that succeed. Columbus predicting the eclipse to the untaught Indians, was thought by them to have miraculous knowledge. But this was relative to their ignorance alone. There was no disturbance of the order of nature, as in the miracles recorded in the Bible. The alleged miracles of false systems of religion are either devoid of evidence as matters of fact, or they can be accounted for by fraud on the part of those who performed them, and ignorance on the part of those who witnessed them. Advancing knowledge diminishes the number of these pretended miracles. But what help can science afford to explain the resurrection of Christ?

him. There are heaths, hills, and forests, parks, palaces, and gardens, entertainments and exhibitions, picnics and bean-feasts, and "nine-hours" trips to watering places, and various spots of country where he may realise the aspiration of the town-bound seamstress of Hood's grand song—

"Breathe the breath  
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,  
With the sky above his head  
And the grass beneath his feet."

But while each and all of these have their attractions, there is probably no one of them finds such general favour in the eyes of Jack as does the holiday styled by himself "a blow on the river," say a trip to Gravesend and back by the river steamer. It is a holiday that has the important advantage of being *all* holiday. The passage to and fro, so purgatorial an affair in many "outs," and more especially in day excursions by rail, is in the Gravesend trip the pleasantest feature of the holiday. It affords the "blow," which gives the characteristic name to the holiday, and which in the hot summer months is so ineffably welcome and refreshing to those whose lines are cast in the oppressively overcrowded working-class districts of London. It is along the "silent highway," and gives a fuller sense of escape from the city's busy hum than any land excursion does, and the motion is gliding and sufficiently slow to admit of easy sight-seeing.

And for the river steamboat excursionist there are plenty of sights which, if not particularly striking in themselves, serve to promote pleasant, chatty conversation. First comes the "Dreadnought," which, though no longer used as a seaman's hospital, still lies at her moorings in the river; and just below it is Greenwich College. These give rise to remarks bearing upon naval glory and vicissitudes, and the recounting of anecdotes of the Nelson period. Down by Erith, again, a neat-looking villa, pleasantly situated among a clump of trees, is pointed out with pleasant interest as Eliza Cook's house. This sight gives a poetical turn to the conversation, and "The Old Armchair," and "I'm afloat, I'm afloat," are quoted freely. While, however, it is pleasant to find that a large number of the proverbial Jack class are acquainted with the works of this genial poetess, it must be confessed that sometimes a river voyager, on being shown the house, asks, "And who was Eliza Cook?" But the question, when asked, is always answered at length, and the probability is that more than one of her admirers owe their introduction to her writings to a trip on the river steamboat.

Training vessels, floating powder-magazines, the great merchant ships being towed up and down the river, and the exchange of passing salutes with other excursion steamers, suggest still further variety of topics to the conversationally inclined, while those who may not be disposed to talk can muse, under the soothing influence of the "music on the waters," discoursed by the ancient and somewhat seedy harpist, and youthful and somewhat swellish violinist, who constitute the band. The band is a recognised part of the outfit of the river excursion boat, and it is perhaps worth noticing that a considerable percentage of the tunes they play are nautical, the "Jolly Young Waterman," "Tom Bowline," and the like.

Whether or not the bandsmen are paid anything

by the steamboat companies, is a rather delicate question we have never ventured to ask. But however that may be, certain it is that from time to time they come round among the passengers with a collecting box, in which, glittering among a lot of coppers, is frequently to be seen "a splendid shilling," concerning which coin there is a legend among excursionists, to the effect that it is placed there by the bandsmen themselves as a bait. But so far as our experience goes—and it has been considerable—the *ruse*, if it is a ruse, has never been successful. No other shilling, or even a sixpence, has been "given in a lump." Jack is willing to pay the piper liberally according to his means, but his means do not usually run beyond coppers.

Those on board the boat who feel inclined to read—and numbers of them are to be seen newspaper or book in hand—can do so without straining or injuring the eyes, as would be the case on a railway, while those who require to do so can eat or drink in comfort. There is a dining saloon with a *table d'hôte* dinner on the table, while at frequent intervals the steward, with a corkscrew stuck in the band of his apron as a sort of badge of office, passes along the deck to receive the orders of such as may desire to have refreshment brought to them.

When these varied advantages are considered, the popularity of the river excursion form of holiday is easily understood. It is patronised by all types of Jacks; by married Jack, courting Jack, single young-fellow Jack, clerk Jack, shopman Jack, artisan Jack, labourer Jack, military Jack, and naval Jack. For though it might be thought that sea-going Jack would look upon a river trip with something of contempt, it is a noticeable fact that this kind of holiday is held in especial favour by sailors who, being at home from a long voyage, are enjoying a day's pleasure with their families or sweethearts. This may perhaps be in some degree owing to the circumstance that among the landsmen excursionists sailor Jack finds himself somewhat of a lion. He can point out the differences between brigs, barks, and schooners, tell the nationality of flags, and speak practically on "the rule of the road at sea," and other matters of that kind, and so his acquaintance is sought by those of his fellow holiday-makers in whom passing incidents arouse a thirst for such information.

We have passed Erith, the last of the calling-places at which passengers are taken in, and our company being all on board, let us take a turn around the deck and observe some of the more characteristic groups and individuals, whom our artist friend has here reproduced, as seen on a certain Monday when sailing down the river on holiday purpose bent, and happily unconscious of the presence among them of a couple of "chiels" taking notes and sketches, and meaning to print them.

The man at the wheel is a study by himself. Solemn and steady he looks amidst the levity around him. Down the river is no holiday to him, and his pleasure will come when that of the passengers is over. In front of him observe a young gentleman perseveringly regarding the horizon through a telescope; as one of the passengers slangily but pithily observes, "he is struck nautical." He wears a pea jacket, and when his telescope is not at his eye, he carries it after the fashion of the wooden midshipmen that serve as shop signs to ships' instrument makers, while when using the glass it is palpably evident



that it would afford him the utmost gratification to be enabled to shout out, "A sail!" or "Land ho!" This hobby, however, is a harmless one. It interferes with no one else's enjoyment, while it enables him to enjoy his own blow on the river with a double joy.

Seated with his back to this nautically-inclined

pleasant, rosy face of the young wife, you can easily imagine her becoming in due time the stout, comely, good-humoured matron that Mrs. Jones is. Behind Jones sits a city clerk who, under cover of reading his newspaper, takes envious stock of the couple who with hands clasped are sitting beside him and happily labouring under the pleasing delusion that



young man is Jones the family man. He is "dressed in his Sunday best," but with an every-day cutty in his mouth. The notice, "No smoking abaft the funnel," I may say once for all is not strictly regarded. It is easy to see at a glance that this is a moderately well-to-do artisan. He has probably been making overtime during the last few weeks, and on the strength of it has treated his wife and family, and his wife's brother and mother, who—as you gather from the conversation which you must perforce hear as you stand near the party—are on a visit to him, to a trip down the river. Jones, you can see, is a good-humoured fellow, and at this moment he is especially so. Some of the passengers have been taking notice of and praising his youngest child, a pretty, golden-haired, nicely-dressed little girl, who crows and laughs merrily as he dances her about to the strains of the band.

Sitters-by look on smilingly, and none with more pleased admiration than the young couple seated next to the Jones party, the husband with his arm thrown with apparent carelessness but real caressingness around his wife's waist. Perhaps as they gaze they are thinking that "this is but a picture of what they may be." For the young fellow is as evidently a mechanic as is Jones himself, and looking at the

their proceedings are shut out from the ken of the outer world by the girl's small sunshade. Love-making couples form no unimportant item in the statistics of the deck. Among them we see a "modern instance" of Mars and Venus, the guardsman tall and slim, Susan short and stout. The guardsman, it is obvious, strongly "fancies himself;" devotes more attention to what he conceives to be the graceful carrying of his gloves and cane than to the young woman. But Susan, being love-blind, is unconscious of this, and gazes proudly up into the face of her soldier sweetheart. It is triumphantly, not flirtingly, that she smiles upon the horsey-looking young man, seated on the bulwark, switch in hand and straw in mouth. For the million hath its snobs as the upper ten thousand hath, and the horsey young man is of them.

And there is a group of four which seems to have special attractions for the ladies, who whisper that it is a wedding. With this hint you can see that it is a wedding party. The white dress and gloves, a spray of orange blossom in the bonnet, and a brand new wedding ring, sufficiently indicate the bride. There is also a more than ordinary holiday smartness about the dress of the bridegroom, and a more than ordinary holiday expression of happiness upon his

face. The other two are of course the bridesmaid and best man, the one being probably an old fellow-servant of the bride, the other a shopmate of the bridegroom's. Many are the significant glances cast upon the "happy pair," but it is with a kindly curiosity, and a smile that seems to wish them as smooth and pleasant a voyage through life as that they are now taking by way of a wedding trip.

To the toiling millions of the metropolis, the river excursion is a most enjoyable and refreshing form of "out," and it is one which involves little temptation to dissipation; one in connection with which very little dissipation is ever seen. Occasionally a drunken man may be met with on the return journey, but he is a rarity, and finds a plentiful lack of anything in the nature of sympathy among the general body of the passengers. The only noteworthy feature in which the homeward run differs from the outward, lies in the consumption of shrimps that goes on. The specialty of Gravesend is shrimps, and it is "the thing" among the excursionists to buy a pint to be eaten on the way home.

## GOSSIP ABOUT NOTABLE BOOKS.

BY JOHN TIMES.

### I.

#### CURIOSITIES OF ANCIENT LITERATURE.

It is not my intention in this flying glance at Notable Books to comprise the history of the transmission of ancient books to modern times; or accounts of early printed books, further than in a few salient points of such works. Thus, Pausanias relates that a book by Hesiod was written on leaves of lead; and Herodotus mentions the use of skins by the Ionians when papyrus was scarce, which seems to show that he wrote on papyrus, or the manufacture of paper, "reeds of Egypt which grew by the brooks." Pliny saw in the hands of Pomponius Secundus, a nobleman and poet, the books of the Gracchi, written with their own hands on papyrus; and adds that the works of Virgil, Cicero, and Augustus Cæsar, were written on the same materials. Pliny mentions linen books, and Virgil alludes to books that were made of the inner rind of the elm. There are authorities for believing that some short epistles were folded up without a roller, and that Homer, who wrote about 900 B.C., alludes to a tablet of this kind. Here also may be mentioned the waxen hand-tablets of the ancients, inscribed with the point of the style, and smoothed with its flat end; their commonplace books; their paper of the rind of the papyrus; their ink of the cuttle-fish; their pens, mentioned by Juvenal; their reeds for writing, and the penknives and scissors of Byzantine writers. Pliny is in error in saying that papyrus was not used for paper before the time of Alexander the Great; for papyri of the most remote Pharaonic period are found with the same mode of writing as that of the age of Cheops. A papyrus now in Europe, of the date of Cheops, establishes the early use of written documents, and the antiquity of paper made of the hyblus long before the time of Abraham. As papyrus was expensive, few documents of that material are found, and these are generally rituals, plans of estates, and official papers. Papyrus was used until the seventh century of our era. A soldier's leave of

absence has been discovered written upon a piece of broken earthenware (Dr. Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature"). The *Prisse papyrus*, now in the Bibliothèque at Paris, has been ranked by Messrs. de Rongé and Habas the most ancient book in the world; though there are lapidary inscriptions of much earlier date. The papyrus itself is ascribed with probability to the eleventh Manethonian dynasty. It contains, besides a collection of proverbs, the last two pages of a similar work by an author who lived in the days of kings Urna and Snefru, probably of the third dynasty of Manetho. In the second page is named the author, Kakemna, who is claimed as the oldest literary character known in the world's records, of whose works any remnant has been handed down to our times. The Greek papyrus mss. in the British Museum show the style of writing.

#### EARLY ENGLISH BOOKS.

Of more cognate interest to the general reader is the history of early English printed books. The mis-statements which have crept into the accounts of the oldest English printed books have been made through want of precision in the authors of such representations, which it is the object of this note to methodise and correct.

1. The first book printed in the English language was "Le Fevre, Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy," printed abroad by Caxton, in 1471.

2. The first book printed in England was "The Game and Playe of Chesse," printed by Caxton, in Westminster Abbey in 1474.

3. The first book printed on paper made in England was the work of Bartholomæus de Glanville, called the English Pliny; it is entitled, "*De Proprietatibus Rerum*," and was translated into English by John Trevisa in 1397, and was printed by Wynken de Worde in 1496, on paper first made for the purpose in England. It was reprinted in 1535 by Berthelet, and re-edited by Bateman, and printed by East in 1582. Dr. Dibdin styles Wynken de Worde's "a volume of extraordinary typographical beauty and rarity." In some verses at the end of this edition, W. de Worde says: "And also of your charyte call to remembrance the soule of William Caxton first prynter of this booke at Coleynn, himself to aduance." This has puzzled all bibliographers, because no edition of the work is known which Caxton printed; *though he might have been engaged on one when he was learning the art.*

#### BOOKS ON ANGLING.

Of this period is the celebrated work by Dame Juliana Berners (a sister, it is supposed, of Richard Lord Berners, of Essex), prioress of Sopwell, near St. Albans: of this work, entitled the "*Boke of St. Albans*," in 1486, was the first edition printed at Sopwell, probably with Caxton's type. It contains treatises on hawking, hunting, and coat-armour; and to the republication, in 1496, printed by Wynken de Worde, at Westminster, was added a treatise on fishing. From this noble and learned lady's book, occasional leaves, with small variations, are to be seen in almost every work on angling. Here is an *envoy* from Dame Juliana: "The angler at the least hath his holsum walke, and mery at his case, a swete air of the swete savoure of the meede floures, that maketh him hungry; he hereth the melodious armony of foules, wyth their brodes; whyche me seemeth better thanne all the noysy of houndes, the blastes

of hornys, and the serye of foulis, that hunters, fawkeners, and foulers can make. And if the angler take fysche, surely thenne is noo man merier than he is in his spryte." For some time Dame Juliana's book seems to have been all-sufficient for our ancestors; nor does there appear to have been any other publication of note until 1651, when "The Art of Angling," wherein are discovered many rare secrets, written by Thomas Barker, an ancient practitioner in the said art, made its appearance in the shop of Oliver Fletcher, near the "Seven Stars," at the east end of St. Paul's. Next appeared Walton's "Contemplative Man's Recreation;" after which treatises soon began to multiply. Walton's "Angler" appeared in the first year of Cromwell's sole rule (1653), just before Monk defeated Van Tromp off the North Foreland. Of this book fifty-three editions have appeared in the 217 years that have elapsed. Sir Harris Nicolas, in his splendid edition of Walton's "Angler," in two quarto volumes, says of it: "Whether considered as a treatise on the art of angling, or as a beautiful pastoral, abounding in exquisite descriptions of rural scenery, in sentiments of the purest morality, and in an unaffected love of the Creator and his works, it has been long ranked among the most popular compositions in our language."

## ARISTOTLE.

Aristotle's "History of Animals," which lay buried for above 2,000 years, is a collection of facts observed under peculiar advantages, such as have never since occurred, and it is at the present day consulted for new discoveries. According to Pliny, for the above work some thousands of men were placed at Aristotle's disposal throughout Greece and Asia, comprising persons connected with hunting and fishing, or who had the care of cattle, fish-ponds, and apiaries, in order that he might obtain information from all quarters. According to Athenæus, Aristotle received from the prince on account of the expenses of the work, eighty talents, or upwards of £79,000. It has been shown that in this work Aristotle anticipated Dr. Jenner's researches respecting the cuckoo; and some discoveries respecting the incubated egg, which were published as new in 1840. Aristotle's observations on fish and cetaceous animals are extremely curious, as might be expected from the variety of these animals in the Grecian Sea. He describes the economy of bees as we have it at present, but mistakes the sex of the queen; his account of the habits and structure of the cuttle-fish is ranked among the most admirable natural history essays ever written; and he describes the various organs as modified throughout the different classes of animals (beginning with man) in nearly the same order as that afterwards adopted by Cuvier.

## HORNBOOKS.

Hornbooks are now of great rarity, and even modern ones are very seldom seen. Mr. Halliwell was told, on very good authority, that an advertisement, many times repeated, offering a considerable sum for a specimen, failed in producing one. Yet little children were by this rude means taught to read in the last century; the alphabet, etc., were printed upon white paper, which was laid upon a thin piece of oak, and covered with a sheet of horn, secured in its place by eight tacks driven through a border or mounting of brass; the object of this horn covering being to keep the leaf un-

soiled. The first line is the cross-row, "so named," says Dr. Johnson, "because a cross is placed at the beginning to show that the end of learning is piety." Shakspeare has a reference to this line:

"He hearkens after prophecies and dreams,  
And from the cross-row plucks the letter G."

Again, in "Love's Labour Lost," Moth, the page to Armado, says, in describing Holofernes the schoolmaster, "He teaches boys the hornbook." The hornbook is also described by Ben Jonson:

"The letters may be read *through the horn*,  
That makes the story perfect."

Sir Thomas Philipps, on Middlehill, possessed, in his collection, two genuine hornbooks of the reigns of Charles I and II. Locke, in his "Thoughts on Education," speaks of "the ordinary road of the hornbook and primer." The title of hornbook has been otherwise applied than to a school-book, as Dekker's "Gull's Hornbook," a satire.

Shenstone was taught to read at a dame school in Shropshire, and thus speaks of his schoolmistress:

"Lo; now with state she utters her commands;  
Eftsoone the urchins to their tasks repair;  
Then books of stature small they take in hand,  
Which with pellucid horn secured are,  
To save from finger wet the letters fair."

Cowper thus describes the hornbook of his time:

"Neatly secured from being soiled or torn,  
Beneath a pane of thin translucent horn,  
A book (to please us at a tender age,  
'Tis called a book, though but a single page,  
Presents the prayer the Saviour deigned to teach,  
Which children use, and parsons—when they preach."

John Britton, who was born in Wiltshire, in 1771, tells us in his "Autobiography," that he was placed with a schoolmistress. "Here," he adds, "I learnt the Christ-cross row from a hornbook, on which were the alphabet in large and small letters, and the nine figures in Roman and Arabic numerals."

The hornbook was not always mounted on a board; many were printed on the horn only, or pasted to its back, like one used sixty years ago, by a friend, when a boy at Bristol. We have somewhere read of a mother tempting her son along the cross-row by giving him an apple for each letter he learnt. This brings us to the gingerbread alphabet of our time, which, however, was common in the time of Prior:

"To master John the English maid  
A hornbook gives of gingerbread;  
And that the child may learn the better,  
As he can name, he eats the letter."

Locke mentions a curious stratagem of tuition: "By pasting the vowels and consonants on the sides of four dice, he has made this a play for his children, whereby his eldest son in coats has played himself into spelling."

We see the Italian hornbook in a picture by Schidone, who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In this fine composition, a girl in the foreground holds a hornbook, which has, beneath the cross-row, the Lord's Prayer in Latin, etc., the whole with a border of pleasing design. We read, too, of "a Pelasgic hornbook." Thus, in the Gregorian Museum in the Vatican, is a Pelasgic alphabet, scratched on a vase, or ink-bottle, of common terracotta, and arranged in simple letters and in syllables, so that it might serve both as an alphabet and a



spelling-book. This relic was found in a tomb of ancient Care (Cervetri): it has twenty-five letters in the pure Pelasgic character, reading, unlike the Etruscan, from right to left. Dr. Lepsius, of Berlin, regards it as the most ancient known example of the Greek alphabet and its arrangement, and considers the letters to be the most ancient forms of the Greek characters. Among its other peculiarities, the letters *Eta* and *Omega* are altogether wanting, whilst the *Tau* and *Kappa* are present. The syllables on the body of the bottle are merely combinations of the consonants with the vowels, i, a, u, e, beginning with Bi, Ba, Bu, Be, for which reason the relic has been not inaptly called a Pelasgic hornbook.

SIR RICHARD BAKER.

"Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle of the Kings of England" has a strange history. Baker was a native of Oxfordshire, where he married and settled soon afterwards. Having got into difficulties, he was thrown into the Fleet prison, where he spent the remainder of his life, and died in the year 1644-5, in extreme poverty. During his imprisonment, and as a means of subsistence, he wrote his "Chronicle," which he boasted was collected and compiled "with so great care and diligence, that if all other of our chronicles were lost, this only would be sufficient to inform posterity of all passages memorable, or worthy to be known." This is boastful overmuch. Yet the Chronicle enjoyed great popularity, for more than a century after its publication, among the squires and ancient gentlewomen of the school of Sir Roger de Coverley. It was ridiculed by Addison and Fielding; but Anthony à Wood styles Baker a noted writer; Daines Barrington says he is by no means so contemptible a writer as he is supposed to be; for more than a century his Chronicle was the text-book of English history to country gentlemen and their families. If Sir Richard Baker had been imprisoned in such a house as the British Museum, instead of the Fleet, he would, doubtless, have produced a more correct book, with less pleasantry in it.

HUDIBRAS.

Samuel Pepys, the diarist, was a man of average perception, yet he could not appreciate the wit and humour of Butler's "Hudibras." His efforts to do so were most diverting. The work was then in its full blaze of popularity. Possibly, some remaining predilection for the opinions which are ridiculed in this witty satire prevented Pepys falling in with the fashion of admiring it. The first part of "Hudibras" cost him two shillings and sixpence, but he found it so silly and abusive of a Presbyterian knight going to the wars, that he became ashamed of it, and sold it for eighteenpence. Wise by experience, he did not buy the second part, but only borrowed it to read. Pepys has been laughed at for his dulness; but, as said by A. Ramsay, who has edited "Hudibras," "there is, probably, no author who is so popular, and so little understood," and "it is truly said that no one ever reads 'Hudibras' through." Yet Ramsay relates this extraordinary exception. Two barristers, in a country walk, were overtaken by a labouring man, to whom they made a passing remark on the fineness of the evening, and he replied, "Yes, sirs,

"The moon pulls off her veil of light,  
That hides her face by day from sight

(Mysterious veil, of brightness made,  
That's both her lustre and her shade),  
And in the lanthorn of the night  
With shining horns hangs out her light."

"Heyday!" said one, "you quote 'Hudibras!' Pray do you know any more of it?" "Yes, sir," replied the man, "I have but few books, and 'Hudibras' is the one I most admire. I know it all by heart." His assertion was tested in repeated recitations of passages not the most familiar. He was the man of one book.

MEMOIRS OF EVELYN.

Of Evelyn's "Memoirs and Diary" is related the following curious circumstance. A short time before their publication, Mr. Upcott, of the London Institution, was at Wotton, in Surrey, the residence of the Evelyn family; and sitting after supper with Lady Evelyn and Mrs. Molyneux, his attention was attracted by a tippet made of feathers, on which the latter was employed. "Ah, Mrs. Molyneux, we have all of us our hobbies," said Mr. Upcott. Lady Evelyn rejoined, "And may I take the liberty of asking what yours is?" "Why mine, my lady, from a very early age, has been the handwriting of men of eminence." "What! I suppose," Mrs. Molyneux said, "you would care for things like these," unfolding one of her thread-cases, which was formed of a letter written by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. "Indeed, I should very much." "Oh, if that be your taste," said Lady Evelyn, "we can easily satisfy you. This house is full of such matters; there is a whole washing-basket full of letters and other papers of old Mr. Evelyn in the garret, which I was so tired of seeing that I ordered the housemaid the other day to light the fires with them, but, probably, she may not yet have done it." The bell was rung, the basket appeared untouched; and the result was the publication of the memoirs of John Evelyn. This anecdote originally appeared in the "New Times" newspaper, and has been attributed to Dr. Stoddart. On applying to Mr. Upcott as to its authenticity he stated it to be incorrect in a letter dated March 19, 1823, and he offered to explain the circumstance correctly, but had not an opportunity of doing so. He adds: "It appeared originally in print entirely without my knowledge or approbation, and arose at a dinner party, I suspect, with Mr. Dibdin, at Kensington." Still, Mr. Upcott does not altogether repudiate the story, but states that the circumstance is not told correctly.

LETTERS FROM "THE FLEET."

"Howel's Familiar Letters" were partly written from the Fleet prison. By a letter, dated November 20, 1643, Howel was arrested "one morning betimes," by five men armed with swords, pistols, and bills, "and some days afterwards committed to the Fleet;" and he adds, "as far as I see, I must lie at dead anchor in this Fleet a long time, unless some gentle gale blow thence to make me launch out." Then we find him consoling himself with the reflection that the English people are in effect but prisoners, as all other islanders are. His letters are models of what letters should be, humorous or serious, affectionate or severe, as the case may require; but practical, clear, concise, and always direct and to the point. There is something also very manly and delightful in their style; and the reading, good humour, and knowledge of life they

display, are immense. Hence, of upwards of forty different publications by this clever travelled gentleman, this alone remains to us, and is read.

#### THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is almost unparalleled in its sales. In ten years the first part had run through twelve editions. It is difficult to ascertain the number of impressions of the early editions. One fact is, however, undoubted, that, during the author's lifetime, not fewer than a hundred thousand copies of the first part were sold. Through how many editions the complete work has passed since Bunyan's death it is impossible to compute. Writers of the most various and even opposite opinions have vied in awarding it the meed of their praise. Johnson and Southey, not less than Cowper and Thomas Scott, and Lord Kaimes, Dr. Franklin, and Dean Swift, as zealously as Ryland, Toplady, Montgomery, Conder, Philip, and Cheever, have assigned to it the first place in the order of works to which it pertains. As natural as Shakespeare, as familiar as Robinson Crusoe, and as idiomatic as the Authorised Version, the spring and fountain of the glorious dreamer's inspiration, it has been read with avidity wherever the English language is spoken, and has been translated into more than thirty languages besides—an honour paid to no other book, the Book of God alone excepted (Memoir, by J. M. Hare). Surprising is it, then, to find, appended to a brief memoir of Bunyan, extending but to twenty lines, in the "Penny Cyclopædia," the following low estimate of his great work: "If a judgment is to be formed of the merits of a book by the number of times it has been reprinted, and the many languages into which it has been reprinted, and the many languages into which it has been translated, no production of English literature is superior to this coarse allegory (the "Pilgrim's Progress"). On a composition which has been extolled by Dr. Johnson, and which in our time has received a very high critical opinion in its favour, it is hazardous to venture a disapproval, and we, perhaps, speak the opinion of a small minority, when we confess that, to us, it appears to be mean, jejune, and wearisome."

#### GLASGOW COLLEGE.

WHATEVER else Scotland may have to boast of, she may point with pride to her parochial schools and universities. These have contributed largely to raise her among the nations, and laid the foundation of much of the enterprise, energy, and success in life, which for three hundred years have characterised the Scots at home and abroad, and given them an honourable place in letters, science, and commerce.

Next to St. Andrew's, and that only by a few years, Glasgow is the oldest of the Scottish universities. It owes its beginning to pre-Reformation times, being founded by a bull issued by Pope Nicholas v, in 1450, and for some years was located near the cathedral. In 1460, James, Lord Hamilton, presented certain tenements of houses, and four acres of land, on the present site of the college, but the buildings did not assume their present form till after the Reformation. In 1560, the university acquired a further

grant of fifteen acres, now known as the "College Green." The front and gateway facing the High Street was not erected till about 1660. Those who have visited Glasgow will remember that dingy-looking old building on the east side of the High Street, with its quaint barred windows, and projecting balcony over the gateway, surmounted by the royal Scottish arms—in the style and period of "the last of the Stuarts." They may have entered and strolled through its four open courts, and on to the handsome modern building, the Hunterian Museum, containing the valuable and interesting collection of Dr. William Hunter, bequeathed by him in grateful remembrance of his connection with this university.

There is nothing which adds more to the honour of this venerable seat of learning than the fact that it has been from the first dependent entirely on "voluntary contributions." We have now before us a curious document entitled, "An inventorie of the voluntar contributions of the souns of money gevin or promised to be gevin for the building of a common librarie within the colledge of Glasgow furnishing thair of with books and utherways enlarging the fabrick of the said colledge to the publick and privat use of the students be the persouns eftermentionat according to thair severall tickatts and subscriptions in this booke."

Of the "persouns eftermentionat," the first, who heads the list, is no less a personage than King Charles the First, who writes in 1633, "It is our gracious pleasure to grant for advancement of the library and fabric of the college of Glasgow the sum of two hundred pounds sterling." At the foot of the page is a note, worthy of record. This sum was paid by the Lord Protector, anno 1654, the king having had other uses for his money, or having forgotten his "gracious pleasure." The Marquis of Hamilton, the Earl of Montrose, and many west country nobles and gentlemen, gave donations, varying from 1,000 to 100 merks (Scotch), followed by a long list of subscribers in all parts of the kingdom.\*

The venerable old college, having served its purpose through successive generations for more than three centuries, the senate of the university and the citizens of Glasgow had determined to provide new buildings, upon a site and on a scale more suited to the requirements of the time. As early as 1846 an arrangement was entered into with a railway company for the sale of the old college and grounds. These arrangements seem to have broken down, and a forfeit of £17,500 was paid by the railway company for the non-fulfilment of their engagement. In 1864 a fresh sale was effected, for the sum of £100,000, which made the sum available for the erection of the new college as follows:—

Profited by non-fulfilment of contract	£17,500
Sale of buildings and grounds	100,000
Voted by Parliament in 1867	120,000
Subscriptions made in response to the appeal of the senate	122,227
Making a total of	£359,727

The total estimate for the new buildings and ground

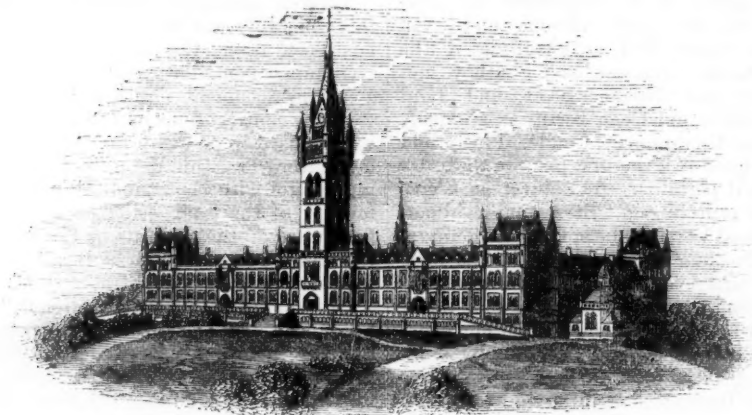
\* From the original record in the university archives, a reprint has been made of this "list of subscribers." Four of the pages, including that of King Charles I's promised gift, being lithographed in fac-simile. In proportion to the wealth of modern Scotland, the old list bears honourable comparison with the list of subscribers to the new buildings, liberal as the modern merchant princes of Glasgow and the alumni of the college have shown themselves.

is £400,000, leaving a balance of £40,000, a sum easily obtained by private subscriptions.

The site for the new college is one of the most eligible spots around Glasgow, beautifully situated on the rising ground to the west of Kelvin Grove, called Gilmore Hill. The plans of the building have been carried out under Mr. Gilbert Scott. The buildings occupy a space of four acres, on the summit of the hill, in the form of an oblong rectangular pile of 600 feet long by 300 feet broad, divided into two quadrangles by the great hall, the tower, and principal entrance and library. It will be seen that the buildings have little of the beauty of the classic, or of the

Syne.' Before they come back to Glasgow to assemble in the splendid halls of the pinnacled palace that overhangs the Kelvin, the Goths and Vandals shall have invaded the old college. Railway clerks will scribble where Zachary Boyd indited his quaint verses, and waybills will be filled up where Adam Smith lectured.

"Truly it was a very old 'Auld Lang Syne' of which the red-gowned students sang on Friday. The original charter of Pope Nicholas v, granted to the public-spirited Bishop Turnbull for the foundation of a *studium generale*, bears date 7th January, 1451. Had Nicholas and Turnbull been to the fore



GLASGOW UNIVERSITY.

ornamental Gothic about them; they are in the style of the early English of the 14th century, with a mixture of what is called the Scottish secular architecture, of the taste of which there is a great difference of opinion. The writer, however, is assured by the authorities of the college that the arrangements of the buildings are likely to give the utmost satisfaction. The main front of the building faces the south and commands an extensive view over the city and surrounding country, and divided from the splendid public park and its palatial mansions, by the romantic and poetical "Kelvin Grove," with one or more light suspension bridges thrown across the Kelvin, connecting the university grounds with the western park, will form a retreat for visitors and citizens of Glasgow unsurpassed by any other city in Europe.

Thus much about the new buildings, which we trust may continue and extend the fame of the university. From the "London Scotsman" we borrow an account of the closing of the old college:—

"Rex mortuus est, vivat rex!" The quaint quadrangles of the venerable old college in the High Street of Glasgow echoed for the last time on Friday, May 6, to the footfall of the hurrying student, whose red gown will be seen no more in the Trongate and the Saltmarket. The dingy old place, with the fruitless orchards behind it, and the seething din of the High Street in its front, is eloquent of many a memory. Was it to conceal a falter in his voice that Professor Ramsay called on the students on Friday to give three cheers for their wrinkled old *Alma Mater*? And then the lads, after the Scottish fashion when the heart is full of tender associations connected with the past, fell a-singing 'Auld Lang

to-day, they would have been fain to run the pen through the clause in the charter which designates the site as 'a notable place and fitted for the purpose by the temperature of the air and the plenty of all provisions for human life,' unless, indeed, they considered the High Street of a salubrious atmosphere, and whisky and salt herrings the leading 'provisions' for the sustenance of the inner man. The 'Pedagogue,' as the College of Arts was then called, was built on the present site of the college in 1458, on ground presented by Lord Hamilton, the original collegiate building having been in the 'Rotten Row,' while the classes were taught in the crypt of the cathedral—the sombre vault so vividly described in Scott's 'Rob Roy.' In the early days the students, we blush to say, were addicted to the robbery of the neighbouring orchards, and, judging by the enactment that they were not to intrude into the sacred region of the kitchen, we gather that they were not above pilfering scraps and fragments of yesterday's dinner if they got the chance. But discipline was stern and prompt in these early days. There was no parade of summons before the Senatus, followed, it might be, by rustication or by the severer penalty of expulsion. Corporal punishment, we are told, was a thing of daily occurrence. The principal himself with his own hand inflicted chastisement on the bare shoulders of the culprit in the common hall, and in the presence of the masters and students therein assembled to witness the edifying ceremony. Among the offences visited with this punishment were the wearing of arms, and the heinous crime of speaking their mother tongue.

"Our modern youths would not take very kindly



to the manner of life prescribed for the Glasgow students of the 15th and 16th centuries. At five o'clock in the morning was given the signal for rising, when the 'hebdomador' went round the bed-chambers to stir up the sluggards. There were lessons from six to eight, then prayers, followed by a frugal breakfast, and more lessons till dinner time at twelve, after which meal a psalm was sung. The rest of the day was spent in the schools till late in the evening, and at 9 p.m. the inexorable hebdomador made his rounds again to see that all were snug in bed, and to take a note of the absentees, with a view, we may be sure, to polite attentions in the region of the shoulders from the hand of the principal. On certain days after dinner and supper 'disputations' were held, which must materially have aided digestion. But three days a-week the afternoon was holiday—set apart for 'play'—the games, 'gouffe, archerie, and the lyke,' being prescribed by an order of the king, and there were dramatic representations, too—amateur theatricals, held on the Sunday after St. Nicholas Day. For some strange reason bathing or swimming was strictly prohibited under pain of 'many stripes and ejection.' But if the lads were kept strictly in hand, they also had their distinctive privileges. The 'civil power' could not touch them. The university held the right of 'plenary jurisdiction' over its own members in all matters, civil and criminal. Every member could claim to be tried before his peers. There is a case on record so late as 1670, in which a student accused of the crime of murder was tried before the rector and acquitted. Even to this day there would appear to be a sort of nominal sanctuary afforded to students by the college walls, and it has very recently been questioned whether a civil officer can insist upon invading the sacred precincts for the purpose of executing the warrant of a judge without permission from the head of the university.

"Of course, the old college has had its ups and downs. In 1472 it had so fallen into decay that the whole of the members, professors, and students numbered only fifteen persons, and its entire income did not exceed £300 Scots, or £25 English. But Andrew Melville came and gave it a stimulus which it never again wholly lost. In his day it is recorded that 'there was no place in Europe comparable to Glasgow for guid letters during these yeirs for a plentiful and guid chepe macat of all kynd of languages, artes, and sciences.' Then quaint old Zachary Boyd got the rectorship, and was continually giving large sums to the building fund—more especially to the building of the steeple. When Zachary died he left his property to the building fund of the college, under the condition that a small portion of the funds should be devoted to the publication of a portion of his ms. works. His executors took the money and laid it out in stone and lime, but never published the manuscripts, for which probably neither Zachary nor the world have been any the worse. The inner quadrangle was finished with the proceeds of Zachary's legacy, including that historical little room on the first floor of the north-west side, immediately under the gallery of the natural philosophy class-room, which formed the workshop of James Watt in his early struggling days, and in which he made his 'potboilers,' while he experimented on the powers of steam. The front of the college towards the street was built about 1659, and about it, too, cling memories of Watt, for here,

close to the principal's gate, was the old house (now rebuilt), on the ground floor of which was the modest shop assigned to him by the professors for the sale of his philosophical instruments. To high-handed and somewhat unscrupulous Principal Gillespie, most of the existing buildings owe their origin. It was in the noble old fore-hall of the college, looking out into the High Street, where the roystering Middleton presided over the 'drunken parliament of Glasgow.' The hall remains identically the same to-day as when its rich old wainscoted walls rang with the excited voices of his lordship's rake-hells, of whom 'all present,' we are told, 'were flustered with drink, save Sir James Lochart of Lee.' Under the malign influence of the evil days of episcopacy and persecution, the university retrograded, falling into debt, and letting some of its professorships drop into abeyance. But the wheel of fortune came round again at the Revolution, when, in common with the other universities of Scotland, it got a goodly slice out of the bishop's rents, and in 1702 the number of its students was 402.

"Coming down to more modern times, we find the old college still prospering mightily." In the words of Mr. Cosmo Innes, the learned editor of the "*Munimenta Universitatis*," "It is enough to point to the names that made Glasgow famous in the past hundred years, omitting those still alive. No other school of learning, within so short a period, can boast of an array of teachers like Cullen and Black in chemistry and medicine—Hutchinson, Reid, Adam Smith, in mental philosophy—Moore, Young and Sandford, in Greek literature—John Millar and Jardine, in what may be called the art of education." "Sandford led to the treasures of Grecian literature, class after class of enthusiastic students. Dr. James Thomson came from Belfast and rescued the chair of Simson from its long decadence. Buchanan made his logic class not only an intellectual palestra, but an excellent school for the art of English composition—too much neglected in Scotland. Harry Rainy and the great oculist, Mackenzie, supported the credit of the medical department; and the names of Dr. Thomas Thomson and Sir William Jackson Hooker were of European renown. There were students, too, in these years who were to make names for themselves in the world—Archibald Campbell Tait, the worthy successor of Arnold at Rugby, the not less worthy Primate of All England; Joseph Hooker, conspicuous among British botanists; Richardson, the favourite pupil of Liebig; Cotton Mather, one of the most accurate of modern Orientalists; Archibald Smith, of Jordanhill, senior wrangler at Cambridge, and the expositor of the deflection of the mariner's compass; Philip Bailey, the author of '*Festus*;' James Hamilton, Halley, Blackburn, Morell Mackenzie, and many more.

"Of the present professorate, connected although they have been with the old college, we shall not speak, since they have not passed with it into the 'have-beens,' but are transplanted into the modern atmosphere and purer air of Dowanhill. It is for them to inaugurate the new college with energy, industry, and skill, so that when it in its turn becomes time-worn and tradition-hallowed, the students of the future, gossiping over its history as they tread the leafy slope that trends so beautifully down to the Kelvin, shall recall their names with admiration and reverence, and speak of them as we have warrant to speak of some of their predecessors."

## Varieties.

**FARADAY.**—The beauty and the nobleness of his character were formed by very many great qualities. Among these the first and greatest was his truthfulness. His noble nature showed itself in his search for truth. He loved truth beyond all other things; and no one ever did or will search for it with more energy than he did. His second great quality was his kindness (*agapé*). It was born in him, and by his careful culture it grew up to be the rule of his life; kindness to every one; always—in thought, in word, and in deed. His third great quality was his energy. This was no strong effort for a short time, but a life-long lasting strife to seek and say that which he thought was true, and to do that which he thought was kind. Some will consider that his strong religious feeling was the prime cause of these great qualities; and there is no doubt that one of his natural qualities was greatly strengthened by his religion. It produced what may well be called his marvellous humility. That one who had been a newspaper boy should receive, unsought, almost every honour which every republic of science throughout the world could give; that he should for many years be consulted constantly by the different departments of the Government, and other authorities, on questions regarding the good of others; that he should be sought after by princes of his own and other countries; and that he should be the admiration of every scientific or unscientific person who knew anything of him, was enough to have made him proud; but his religion was a living root of fresh humility, and from first to last it may be seen growing with his fame and reaching its heights with his glory, and making him to the end of his life certainly the humblest, while he was also the most energetic, the truest, and the kindest of experimental philosophers.

To complete this picture, one word more must be said of his religion. His standard of duty was supernatural. It was not founded upon any intuitive ideas of right and wrong; nor was it fashioned upon any outward expediencies of time and place; but it was formed entirely on what he held to be the revelation of the will of God in the written word, and throughout all his life his faith led him to act up to the very letter of it.—*Dr. Bence Jones's Life of Faraday.*

**OVERCROPPING THE SEA.**—If we continue to recklessly gather in year by year the "harvest of the sea," without taking necessary precautions to insure a succession of the crops, so surely will the time come—and it is not very distant—when our sea farms will cease to be any longer productive. Man's obvious duty is to exercise proper care and judgment in the employment of the requisites necessary to life, so bountifully sent for his use and enjoyment. The tiller of the soil may sow the seed, and, aided by science and experience, so prepare the land as to insure every needful requirement for the growth of the plant, but there his power ends; for further help he must trust to a beneficent and all-wise Creator. We can expend our last grain of wheat, but, with all our boasted knowledge and progress, we are not able to make another to replace it. We call the attention of our readers to a very valuable description in our sea fisheries columns of a huge sea farm, or fish-breeding establishment, belonging to Baron Gudin. Under the auspices of many influential gentlemen in France, a company appears to have been formed for the express purpose of developing, on a most extensive scale, the principles of fish culture by means of artificial reservoirs. Again and again we have suggested the advisability of trying a similar plan on our own coasts; firstly, because such a system properly carried out would tend greatly to increase our knowledge of the habits of sea fish, and secondly, it would probably open up a field for utilising and turning to profitable account the incalculable quantities of fish fry now thrown away as waste. If the baby flat fish caught in shrimp nets and "ground seines" were carefully collected, reared, and fed in artificial reservoirs, as turbot are in the French fish farm, surely it would be one way to economise a vast amount of most valuable food at present wantonly destroyed.—*Land and Water.*

**GIANT PINE-TREES OF CALIFORNIA.**—We went up and down among the trees for about two hours till our guide cried out, "We shall come to one directly," and sure enough there stood a red-barked monster dwarfing the large trunks among which it grew, as a full-grown tree does a crowd of saplings. Where were our pines, with their 18ft. girth, by the side of a giant some 100ft. round breast high? Of course the great size of the ordinary forest timber in which these huge growths are found takes off from their immense proportions, but if one were set upon a plain it would show like the Eddystone Lighthouse. To

speaking for myself, it was hard to realise that what we saw were trees. Their trunks, when we stood close to them, had almost the appearance of artificial structures. One that had fallen was hollow, and had been broken by its fall. We rode into the break and through the prostrate fragment as if it had been a tunnel. We climbed up on the trunk of another, also fallen, and when I had stepped 55 yards upon it I measured its circumference and found it to be over 25ft. Thus, with its bark on—it had been stripped—it would have been at least some 30ft. in girth at a height of 170ft. from the ground. But these were not the biggest that we saw. The bark of these trees is red, and nearly a foot thick. It lies on the trunk in rough longitudinal ridges like huge muscles, but is so soft that with my pocket-knife I cut off two great hunks from a portion which had been detached, and lay upon the ground. The branches are short, and spring mainly from the upper part of the tree. The foliage is scant in proportion to the trunk, and the cones are little bigger than plover's eggs. The tree itself is said to be a species of gigantic cedar; but it spends its strength in growing more wood than leaves. There are about 600 of these cedars, of different sizes, some being comparatively small, in the Mariposa groups. I do not know the greatest height reached by any one of these, but in another grove the altitude of one is found to be 335ft., and there also a fallen hollow trunk can be ridden through on horseback for a distance of 25 yards.—*Correspondent of the "Times."*

**MINOR IMPORTS.**—The minor imports in the Board of Trade monthly accounts "unenumerated" comprise a most miscellaneous collection of entries. In the year 1868 there was imported into the United Kingdom 22,738lb. of human hair, of the computed value of £9,096, and this was in addition to hair "unenumerated" of the value of £43,097, besides goat's hair and camel's hair. Only one ass was imported in the year, and one mule; but there were 32 goats. As many as 21,024,124 goose quills arrived, and slate pencils of the value of £13,052. The list shows an import of 40lb. of hats of bast, cane, or horse-hair, and 1,490 hats of hair, wool, or beaver; hoofs of cattle of the value of £4,273; 5,323lb. of leaves of roses; 32,976lb. of down; 506,653 bamboo canes, and 86,993 walking-sticks, mounted, painted, etc., besides 4,623,946 canes, or sticks, not specially described; 261cwt. of casts of busts, statues, or figures arrived in the course of the year, and 9,602 oil paintings. The list includes 3,875lb. of chloroform, 118cwt. of caviare, flower roots of the value of £38,272; plants, shrubs, and trees of the value of £38,317; one ton of ore of gold, of the value of £33; precious stones of the higher class, £15,608; and of the inferior class, £14,530; besides unenumerated jewellery of the value of £68,684.

**SINGULAR ACTION OF ELECTRICITY ON WINE.**—The house of a vine-grower at Digne (Basses-Alpes) was struck by lightning some months ago, which penetrated into the cellar and broke several casks, the wine of which flowed into a small vat which was purposely sunk into the floor to receive any liquid spilt by accident. The proprietor, thinking his wine was spoilt, at first sold it at the rate of 10 centimes a litre; but on tasting it some time after, found it excellent, and sold it at 60 centimes. Struck with the curiosity of the occurrence, he asked a scientific friend whether he could explain it, and was told that it could only be the result of electricity, a proposition which should be tested by direct experiment. This was done, and succeeded to such an extent that absolutely bad qualities were transformed into valuable drinks. It so happened that a cask of inferior Moselle was subjected to the process for a month, and then forgotten. One day, however, the cellarman was ordered to put it in bottles, being at the same time informed that it was of indifferent quality. The man, having tasted it, found it, on the contrary, so superior in flavour, that suspecting a mistake, he went and told his employer, who found his wine transformed into an excellent *rancho*. To perform the operation, the wires of the voltaic pile should be tipped with platinum, to which must be attached electrodes of the same metal, which both dip into the liquid to be improved.

**LORD MACAULAY'S ANCESTRAL HOME.**—In the report of the Association in Support of Schools in the Remote Highlands and Islands of Scotland, under the name Melvaig, in the parish of Gairloch, Ross-shire, we read: "One could not but be struck, in reading the roll of the Melvaig school, to find that every child in the school but two was a Macaulay. This is the ancient *habitat* of the Macaulays, and here flourished the ancestors of the great Lord Macaulay, the Macaulays of Breanish."